(b) if so, the details discussed and decision arrived at the meeting: and

(c) whether Government is focusing on the need to augment electricity generation, which has become imperative in light of Government's growth projects and thrust on poverty reduction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, meeting of full Planning Commission was taken by Prime Minister to discuss the draft Integrated Energy Policy for the Country.

The report of Expert Committee on Integrated Energy Policy submitted in August 2006 forms the basis for formulation of the proposed Integrated Energy Policy. The policy document proposes an approach for optimal supply & utilization of energy and the creation of a competitive energy market in India. Nuclear energy remains an important element of India's energy mix.

It was decided that the proposed Integrated Energy Policy be submitted for the Cabinet approval.

(c) Yes Sir.

Utilisation of funds in Government schemes

721. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether utilization of funds is the main problem in Government schemes;

(b) whether utilization of money meant for various schemes of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development have fallen short of achievement targets in a majority of its big schemes;

(c) if so, the other Ministries which have not been able to utilize funds for the schemes; and

(d) if so, the action Government has taken on these Ministries and to what extent Government is considering to see that all the schemes where funds have been provided are fully utilized by Ministries concerned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) to (d) The Information is being collected will be laid on the Table of the House.

Special category status to Rajasthan

†722.DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of various special conditions such as two-third desert and drought-prone area, vast international border abutting Pakistan etc. Government is contemplating to grant special category status to Rajasthan similar to North Eastern States, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Manipur and Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) to (c) Special Category States Status has been accorded to some States by the National Development Council on the basis of a set of criteria that *inter alia* includes having a strategic location on the border with neighbouring countries, hilly and difficult terrain, inadequate economic and social infrastructure, predominantly large tribal population, and limited and weak resource base compared to development needs. Most States that have been granted Special Category Status during the last two decades have been created out of small Union Territories or from districts of some other States' necessitating creation of administrative infrastructure involving overheads cost that was out of proportion to their resource base.

There is no proposal at present before the Government for including Rajasthan in the list of Special Category States.

Employees in Planning Commission

723. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees working in Planning Commission on daily wages since last 15-20 years;

(b) the nature of work being done by them; and

(c) the reasons for not regularizing their employment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) Six persons, who were working on daily wages in Planning Commission in 1993, are still working on daily wages. However, they were disengaged in 1993 and were reengaged in the years 1996, 1998 and 1999.

(b) They are doing casual nature of work such as shifting of furniture and office equipments etc.

(c) Their employment has not been regularized as per the existing Government instructions.

Gap between development in rural and urban sectors

724. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that the gap between the rural and urban sectors is ever widening as far as development and growth are concerned;

(b) whether there are serious disparities in primary education and primary health facilities provided to urban and rural people; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to bridge the gap between development in rural and urban areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) According to the information available from Central Statistical Organisation, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, the per capita income measured in terms of Net Domestic Product (NDP) was Rs.5783 for the rural and Rs.13525 for urban areas in 1993-94, at current prices. The corresponding per capita incomes were Rs. 10606 and Rs. 30217 respectively for 1999-2000, at current prices. No information giving the rural-urban differences in income level is